

***San
Leandro
Computer
Club***

JOURNAL

September, 1991

General Meeting September 3, 1991

Scheduled Speaker:

Greg Pratt,

President - Atari North American Operations



The Future of Atari



An Inside View

Photos & Layout by Jim Hood

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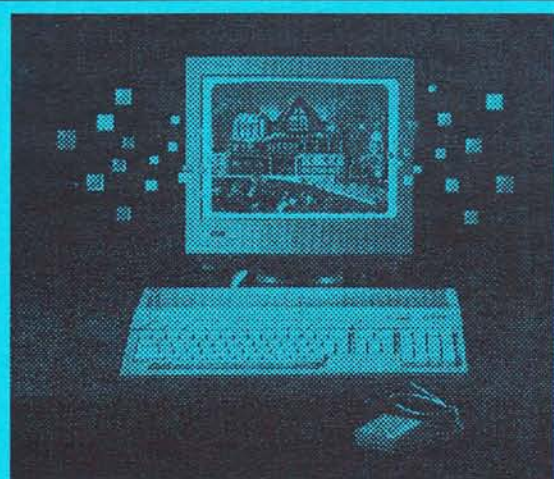
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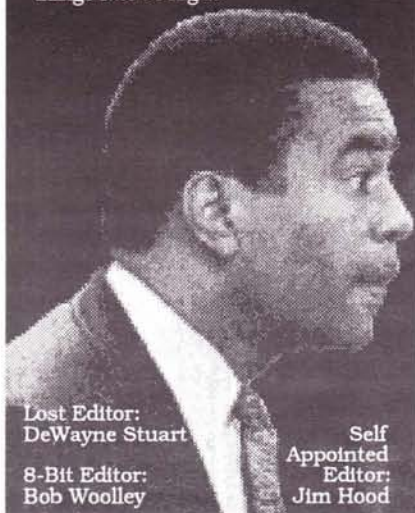
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Lost Editor:
DeWayne Stuart

8-Bit Editor:
Bob Woolley

Self
Appointed
Editor:
Jim Hood

San Leandro Computer Club

P.O. Box 1506

San Lendro, CA 94577-0374

An independent, non-profit organization of Atari microcomputer users. Membership provides access to the club print and magnetic libraries, subscription to the Journal and participation in club activities. A membership application appears elsewhere in this issue.

Club Officers:

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September •

1991

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CALENDAR

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------|
| 1 | 2 | Main Meeting 8:00 p.m. San Leandro Library | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | ST Meeting 8:00 p.m. San Leandro Library | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | ST Beginners' SIG 7:30 p.m. | Publishing SIG 7:30 p.m. | Journal Deadline | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | | | | | |

Call SIG Leaders to confirm meetings.

Pounding on the 8-Bits

Buy your own / Share what you know / 8 bits are plenty

September, 1991

by Bob Woolley

I just love to get letters from other Atari Users out there.... The least I could do is to reply to them as soon as possible, right?

Nope.

The least I can do is throw them into the pile intending to reply to them as soon as I can, burying the last letter I threw on there. Add in a couple of exchange newsletters, a few dozen pages of doodles on what I'm never going to have time to do to my 1200XL, and maybe a couple of neat-o text files on something I want to read about. By now, a letter may as well be in the fourth dimension, because I'm never going to see it again.

Unless I make the time to go thru them. Not that I can do a lot for these guys.....

Like Denny McGuire in Erie, PA. Could I help him with their show in June..... Is that 1992, Denny? Nice.

It doesn't even have to be addressed to me.... Take Alex Pignato from OL' HACKERS. He wrote to Bob Scholar at the Club PO Box. Way back in June..... I relayed the message to Bob yesterday. George Iken, from HACE, really made my day last week - he sent me two copies of the Atari User's Encyclopedia! I have been looking for years for a replacement to the one I lent away and I swear I'm going to get back to him Right Away (to paraphrase a well known SF/computer author). Don Davis - I got your stuff, too. Anthony Watson, you get the floor prize for the oldest letter in "captivity" - August 14, 1990. Of course, James Rogers, from Atari Computer Federation, may be the winner in that category, but he didn't date his letter!

Not a pretty picture.

Like I said, I love to get letters from Atari Folks. Why they send them is beyond me. It certainly isn't for the prompt replies.....

So, what do I do when I'm not answering letters (which is all the time)? ----- I play with all the neat 8-bit stuff I can get my hands on. Like 1450s.

Let me give my impression of the sequence of events at

Atari in the '83 to '84 time frame. First, some marketing type surveys the Atari customer base and discovers three things. One, they can't read. Two, they own a telephone. Three, they like "cheap" software. Now, to Atari's credit, there were some Good Things that came out of this information. Atari put in a Customer Assistance group that would answer any user question over the telephone. Atari also started APX, a great source of cheap software written by other users. These were really inspired ideas! Sadly, these Good Things didn't surface over in the hardware design group.....

And, what did surface? How about a 300 baud modem in every computer? Or, a voice synthesizer? Enter the 1450XLD. To it's credit, it did have a built-in disk drive that was driven off of the PBI (Parallel Buss Interface). But, other than that, the other "features" were duds. If they could have been done simply, or in conjunction with truly useful additions, the machine would have been great. But, they weren't. The original 1450 (called the Tong board) was huge. It took a board 14 inches square to fit all that stuff in. The Tong board used industry standard disk drives that plugged into the mother board directly. The controller was an 8040/8039 with a 2K RAM and a 2797 disk controller. It had a ????? voice chip and a 74HC942 modem driven thru a 6551 serial chip. It also had a quartet of big, multi-purpose glue chips to cut down the logic count. Otherwise, the thing would have needed casters.....

There must have been a couple of guys in hardware that knew something though. The newer version of the 1450 was really nice from a hardware standpoint. The first thing you notice is that it is not transparent - you can't see thru the board. What this means is that it has ground and power planes in a multi-layered board. This is very expensive but gives you very clean logic signals. This is not only important from an FCC standpoint, but also necessary if you want to go fast! The boards I have seen just run at 1.79mhz like everyone else, though - too bad! It is also much smaller, only 9.5 x 14. Where the Tong board had .6x40 pin glue logic, only one large footprint chip remains, the Freddie chip (as in the 130XE). The other glue chips are PLAs in .3x20 pin packages. The 1200XLs have this style chip (the 60609), where the 1450 has the 61617, 61618 (also found in the 800XL and 130XE) and 61619. This seems to place the newer 1450 somewhere after the 1200XL and before the 800XL.

There are also a couple of each type placed up in my Attic. They even power up and run self-test.....

More later!

FOUR 8-BIT DISKS

by Bob Scholar SLCC 8-bit Software Chairman

SLCC DISK—August 1991

Vol.9, No.8

TURBO-BASIC UPDATE

and PROGRAMMING KIT

XL/XE owners boot the front,

NOT for 400/800 computers.

Our July 1990 DOM (Vol.9;#7) had 2 versions of Turbo-Basic (TB)—one for the XL/XE (v. 1.5)—and version 1.4 for the 400/800 computers. That DOM had TURBODOC.NEW (an extensive DOC), and other files, including a compiler.

Recently, we received a set of 3 disks from the Ol' Hackers Atari U. G. (OHAUG) of Oceanside, N.Y. You guessed it—they include an update of TB (the language) and much, much more! This means:—

MAJOR NEW FILES.

- A detailed article explaining the programs on all three disks (PRGKIT.TXT).
- TURBODOC.NEW (the original) + an addendum (TURBO.TXT).
- A compiler DOC,—in English.
- A 2-part tutorial on modular TB programming + examples.
- A library of modules.
- A text file (DOC) on Arrays.
- A text file on sorting.

OTHER FILES

- An Intro. screen (SELFBOOT.ARB). See below.
- A Reader/Printer/Pic. Loader (DOCS, on side a) + a PIC file (ROM.PIC). Left on as a good example of TB modular programming.
- A Reader/Printer form of the above,—for the old DOC. (Called MENU, on side d).
- A special Reader (AUTORUN.SYS, on sides b & c) with two fonts,—for the tutorial.
- A multi-purpose disk utility, and a programming example (SECRTERY.ARB on side c).
- RUNTIME.COM— to run compiled programs.
- PUTGET.TUR DEMOs the fast I/O of TB. Was on our last TB disk,—now updated by Ron Fetzer, who created this 3 disk set. Explanations are in the program.

[I rearranged the files on these 3 disks to fit on two disks. I was able to do this by deleting only a few duplicates.—Bob Scholar.]

When you boot side "a" it will automatically disable BASIC and put TB into your computer. Atari DOS 2.5 is used on all four sides.

Turbo-Basic highlights:—

Following is a brief recap of TB features (per last year's disk) and the new features:—

Runs Atari BASIC and TB programs and executes them 3 times as fast!

Compiler speeds programs another 10-15 times. It works with either TB or Atari BASIC.

DOS functions available from TB are: A (DIRectory);— D (Delete);— E (rEname);— F (lock);— G (unlock);— L & M (use BLOAD & BRUN). Other functions are implemented from DOS or as XIO (or USR?) commands

TB's advantages over Atari BASIC:—

- uses memory more efficiently
- loads from disk
- is case/inverse insensitive
- allows 256 variable names
- 42 more commands
- 22 more functions
- new graphics commands.

New (updated) TB improvements:—

- To create a self-booting file you use any legitimate Atari name; and attach the extender .ARB. With the old version you had to call it AUTORUN.BAS.
- The TIMEI function now keeps time correctly on 60-cycle current. See TURBODOC.NEW and TURBO.TXT for examples of usage.
- The prompt is now TURBO rather than READY. It tells you that you are using the new North American (NTSC) version.
- You can use the BYE statement instead of USR to vector into a M/L routine—see the file TURBO.TXT for additional details.

This is an excellent update of TB; + a tutorial on programming; + a library of modules. Ron Fetzer's work is most impressive!

A few additional words:—

Each side has a Reader or Reader/Printer. Use your favorite word processor for printouts.

TURBODOC.NEW (side d) is unchanged. If you have a printout, just print TURBO.TXT and PRGKIT.TXT.

SELFBOOT.ARB was like the Title screen on our DOMs. I modified it and added the latest FULLMENU which features a faster (M/L) Text reader; by Greg Menard. He's working on a way to add word wrap. I added SLCCD98.DOC, and deleted DUP.SYS.

RANTINGS AND RAYVINGS

PAGESTREAM 2.1 AND OTHER PROBLEMS

By Ray Thomas, DTP Sig Leader

When Pagestream V 1.8 came out, I was still pretty green at this Atari DTP stuff. As an example of that, think about the fact that I was pretty much happy with the things I could do with the Publishing Partner at the time, simply because I didn't know any better—the only other DTP program I had worked with was Pagemaker 1.0 on the Macintosh.

Consequently, I had a lot of trouble figuring out how to get 1.8 up and running on my system.

The biggest problem in getting it working was that, at the time, I had a 512k system with one disc drive. Since Pagestream 1.8 tends to "go to disc" a lot and takes up a lot of memory (in a 512k system), I was having lots of troubles.

But these troubles were compounded by the fact that, with the many "beta" (translation: buggy) versions that came out, the manual became so fragmented that I couldn't really figure anything out. Add to that the fact that Soft-Logik wasn't answering their help line because they were getting so many "gripe" calls, I felt completely abandoned and was forced to continue using Publishing Partner long after I should have been using 1.8.

Now comes Pagestream 2.1 with the ability to use graphics formats I wasn't able to use directly before, more fonts than 1.8 had, plus the ability to take

advantage of lots more fonts.

These are things I've been (impatiently) awaiting for a long time. But when I first got the announcement, I was leery because of my experience with the earlier upgrade. So I opted to wait until I got word through the grapevine that it was actually shipping. If it cost me \$25 more, then so be it.

Then Jim Hood told me he actually had his copy, so I sent in my order. It hasn't arrived yet, but Jim tells me it is generally OK, except for some problems associated with "escape sequences" in setting macros and making color postscript files.

Once I actually get my copy and get a chance to work with it a while, I'll be able to tell you more about it. I'm sure I'll be able to find all the bugs (if any). I'm very good at finding bugs, it seems. Maybe it's because I really make my programs work.

I just hope it's further along than the last upgrade was when they released it, or they at least make the attempt to help those having trouble with it.

THE MFD 1080 IS BACK!

More than a year ago I bought a "piggy-back" 3-1/2" /5-1/4" drive called the MFD 1080 from Microworld. It was made by an outfit in Miami whose name escapes me until I find their manual, which can't be found at this moment.

Soon it began wiping the

directories of my data discs, making them unusable. It "ate" a grand total of ten, including their backup discs (I only had one disc drive besides this one, remember).

After six weeks of frustration and hair pulling locating the problem in this disc, it was found that the maker, after getting no answer from Atari when they asked for specs, went ahead and made them, using four different "off-the-shelf" drives—one of which turned out to be incompatible with the Mega. Guess which one I got?

I sent it back for warranty repairs to get the offending drive replaced, and—they went out of business. So I'm out two disc drives; this one and the one I traded in on it.

Now comes news that Covesystems, 50 Covewoods Rd., Oyster Bay Cove, NY 11771 has bought them out, is marketing the drives and making an effort to correct the problems caused by their demise.

If any of you have had a problem with this drive and couldn't get anything out of them, check with Covesystems. But send them copies of any documentation you may have.

I may have a problem there when I contact them, because I sent the drive to Miami by parcel post. Hopefully, they've got some paperwork from the company they bought out to verify my problem. Let's hope so.

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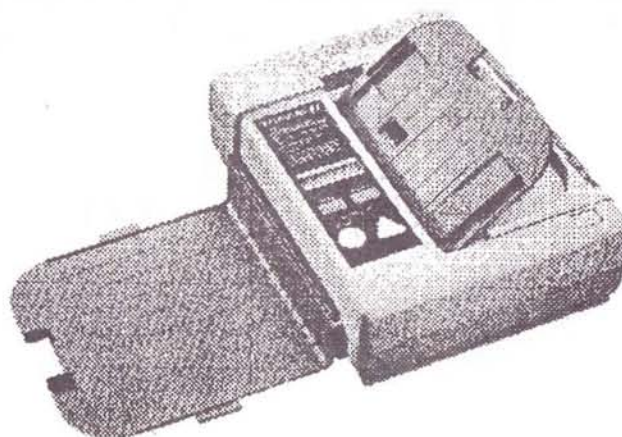
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PageStream 2.1 Continued

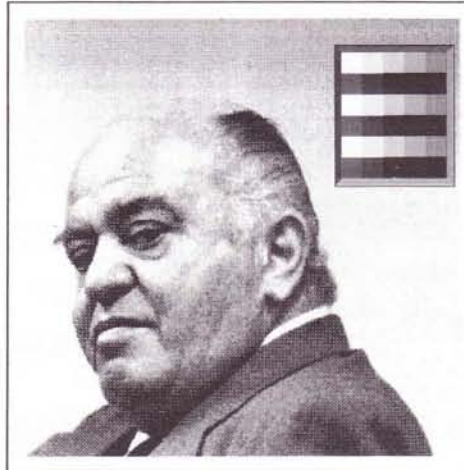
Jim Hood

Last month I didn't get to the Lino service center in time to include Lino-tronic PostScript output with my PageStream 2.1 samples; so here they are this month. We still haven't done any Atari Laser/UltraScript printing either. This report could go on for months!

The font names on this page align with their respective samples on the next page.

I guess I was most intrigued with the Helvetica/Triumvirate font samples. I think the Compugraphic Triumvirate font, printed with the Hewlett Packard driver, looks more like the Lino Helvetica than the PostScript laser Helvetica does.

I'm also sticking in a couple of Touch-Up scans that were Lino'ed. The top is a straight IMG. The bottom was converted in Touch-Up to the thirty-two gray level TIFF format.



"PageStream" Style Fonts

Bengal

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Ice Bold

PostScript Mode

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We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these, are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established, should not be **changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable,**

Linotronic 300

1270 dpi

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

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Hewlett Packard Mode

300 dpi

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Moran's Mirabile dictu Meeting Miscellanea

General Meeting Minutes August 6, 1991

The meeting was called to order at 8:07 PM by President Woolley. (late again) All Officers were present.

Visitors were introduced. Tonight's raffle prizes from WINNERS CIRCLE, HERB'S DISCOUNT SOFTWARE and the great and noble BOB WOOLLEY were shown.

One of our members is looking for a calendar program for the ST that allows daily comments to be written in and printed out similar to the full page calendar sometimes used in the JOURNAL. Anyone knowing of one should pass the word.

The president asked about any interest in doing an ATARI fair with other user groups in the area. Much discussion followed concerning the trials and tribulations of putting on such a fair. Sir Bob will further research and discuss the idea.

Considerable time was spent discussing the two BBS's that the club sponsors. These discus-

sions have been raised due to the costs involved and how they affect the club's budget. The following motion's were duly made and seconded.

MOTION - That the club eliminate support to STU's place. Motion carried.

MOTION - That the club study the KEY SYSTEM BBS to put it to best use of all the members by upgrading the equipment, adding a second line, etc.

Bob Scholar said that the July 8 Bit floppy was in the library and the August floppy would consist of two disks about Turbo Basic, there is a new upgrade to the program on the disk plus a tutorial on modular programing with samples.

Jim Ahrens said there were two new clip art disks and a new game disk in the ST library.

After the raffle (almost honest this month(I Won)) it was announced that DAMARK INTERNATIONAL inc. were selling off the ATARI SX212 1200 baud modems for \$19.99.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9.55 PM.

Jim Moran - Secretary



San Leandro Computer Club — Membership Application

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(Street) (City) (State) (ZIP)

Home Phone: _____
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ISAC Hi Res Color Video Board\$569
It works with 1024 X 768 hi-res color monitors. Great for CAD, Database, Pagestream, Calamus, spreadsheet, Prism Paint,...etc.

SupraModem 2400 Plus\$189
This modem includes MNP 2-5 & CCITT V.42 for hardware error correction & data compression protocols. Up to 9600 bps throughput when using V.42.

Autoswitch Overscan\$119
It uses the black border around the screen to increase the resolution of your monitor up to 50%. Works with most software and auto switches back to normal mode if not compatible.

DVT VCR Hard Drive Back-Up System.....\$89
Use your VCR as a tape drive to back-up your hard drive. Back-Up rate is 1 meg per minute. It does write verify. One VHS tape can back-up 300 meg.

AdSpeed 16 mhz Accelerator\$269
This accelerator board from ICD really works and is 100% compatible with all software. Many programs we tested ran two times faster. Installation is available.

High Density Floppy Module\$89
This by far is the most inexpensive path to HD floppy capability for your ST. Works with 1.44 or 1.2M drives. Easy to install.

JRI Memory/Color Board.....\$109
It upgrades memory to 1, 2, 2.5, and 4 meg using SIMM's. And it extends the color palette to 4096 colors with an optional Atari video shifter chip. It fits in all ST's.

AT-Speed.....\$299
Excellent IBM 286 AT emulator, it supports EGA and VGA monochrome too. Norton rating 6.7

Magazines\$1.00 to \$9.50
AtariUser, ST Format, ST User/ST World, ST Action, The One ST.

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I was talking to Michael St.Pierre just before last month's meeting and he mentioned that he might bring his 8-bit in an IBM case to the next meeting. So, I wrote it in the Journal. This was not a good idea. Michael didn't make the meeting and really hadn't committed to do so..... Oooops. Not Michael's fault - mine.

Now, Greg Pratt, on the other hand, has a little firmer date. He should be at the September meeting. Don't miss it!

Did you all pick up on the new raffle gimmick, the Brown Bag Surprise? The ST and General meeting winners each got a 1 meg SIMM memory board for a measly \$1.00 ticket. Not too bad - watch for them in the future!

Yore Prez....

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Leandro
Computer
Club** P.O. Box 1506
San Leandro, California
94577-0374



**General Meeting
September 3, 1991
Greg Pratt, President
Atari U.S. - Speaker
San Leandro
Community Library
300 Estudillo Avenue**

Your Name could go HERE!
See Application inside!